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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL (for general distribution)

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Further information (1) on UA 33/95 (ASA 21/14/95, 13 February 1995) - Intimidation / Fear for Safety

INDONESIA/ EAST TIMOR

Up to 15 detained in East Timor, including Paul Asis, Antonio Miguel Escurial Soares (36), Ricky Valmero

Attacks by so-called *Ninja* gangs appear to have subsided in the East Timorese capital, Dili. However, up to 15 individuals are reported to have been arrested by police and military forces in the city between 18 and 22 February 1995. Amnesty International is concerned that some of those in detention may at risk of torture. To date, the organization has few details of the arrests.

One of those known to have been arrested is Antonio Miguel Escurial Soares, who was detained by the Indonesian military intelligence unit, *Satuan Tugas Intelijen* (SGI) on 18 January and transferred to police custody in Mascarenhas, Dili. He was reportedly arrested from the village of Santa Cruz in Dili. Precise reasons for his detention are unclear. Paul Asis was reportedly summoned for questioning by the authorities on 20 February. Ricky Valmero is reported to be held in police custody.

East Timor's police chief, Andreas Sugianto, quoted by Reuters on 21 February, stated that 14 people are currently being held, 12 of whom will be charged in relation to their attempts to set up vigilante groups to counter attacks by the *Ninja* gangs. While some of those detained appear to have been arrested in connection with vigilante activities, it appears that others may have been arrested for their involvement in pro-independence activities and were people previously targeted by the *Ninja* gangs.

Amnesty International fears that some of those in detention may be at risk of torture, particularly in view of allegations made by the family of Ricky Valmero that he has been tortured while in custody.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The recent arrests follow activities in East Timor by the so-called *Ninja* gangs, who began operating in early February 1995, stoning and burning houses and attacking residents of Dili. Their primary objective appears to have been to target pro-independence activists and to create an intensified atmosphere of fear for those opposed to Indonesian rule. Sources claim that these gangs were hired by the security forces to intimidate pro-independence activism. Military spokesperson Major Laedan Simbolon has denied that the groups were linked to the military and alleged that the groups were East Timorese opposed to Indonesia's occupation of their country. Several members of the *Ninja* gangs are believed to have been detained. It appears that the *Ninja* gangs are no longer active in Dili; however, there are unconfirmed reports that they are continuing their activities in more remote areas of East Timor. It is not known whether or not 29 individuals who were allegedly abducted by the these gangs between 7 and 13 February 1995 are still being held.

Since November 1994, the level of unrest in East Timor has increased dramatically with a greater number of peaceful demonstrations, as well as riots against Indonesia's occupation of East Timor. Indonesian security forces have responded to the unrest with arbitrary and short-term detentions, detention of prisoners of

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conscience, torture and suspected extrajudicial executions. In one incident in January, the armed forces announced that they had killed six "guerrillas" in a military confrontation in Liquiza, East Timor. A witness to the killing stated that the six were civilians, not members of the armed resistance. Although the military continue to deny that the six were civilians, the Indonesian Government has acknowledged that soldiers involved in the incident may face a court martial and has announced an inquiry.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/telexes/faxes/express and airmail letters either in Bahasa Indonesia or in your own language:
- urging the Indonesian authorities to provide details of the whereabouts of those detained in recent weeks, as well as any charges that are to be brought against them; urging that those in detention be given immediate and regular access to relatives and lawyers;
- asking that all possible measures be taken to ensure the safety of the detainees;
- calling on the authorities to release any prisoners who may be held solely for the peaceful expression of their beliefs;
- calling on the Indonesian government to allow independent human rights monitors access to East Timor.

APPEALS TO:

MILITARY COMMANDER REGION IX/UDAYANA
(covers East Timor, amongst other areas)
Maj. Gen. R. Adang Ruchiatna
Pangdam IX/Udayana
Markas Besar KODAM IX/Udayana
Denpasar
Bali, Indonesia
Telegrams: **Pangdam IX/Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia**
Salutation: **Dear Brigadier-General**

MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Ali Alatas S.H.
Menteri Luar Negeri
Jl. Medan Taman Pejambon No.6
Jakarta, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 360 517
Telegrams: **Menteri Luar Negeri, Jakarta**
Telexes: **44205; 44469 deplu jkt**
Salutation: **Dear Minister Alatas**

COPIES OF YOUR APPEALS TO:

CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Lt. Gen. (ret.) Ali Said
Ketua, Komisi Nasional Hak Azasi Manusia (KOMNAS HAM)
Departemen Kehakiman RI
Directorat Jenderal Pemasyarakatan
Jl. Veteran No. 11
Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia
Faxes: +62 21 525 3095 (c/o Ministry of Justice)

and to diplomatic representatives of Indonesia accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 6 April 1995.